

via pacis

**volume 6 number 6
advent 1982**

news from behind the wall



Dear Friends,

Greetings from behind the wall!

Yesterday (Nov. 12) Judge Schatz sentenced Bill Douglas and me to six months for probation violation; failure to pay the U.S. Air Force \$324 for alleged damages rendered to the sign outside the main gate of Offutt A.F.B.--home of the Strategic Air Command. Three of ten sign painters were arrested as one hundred supporters looked on, Dec. 28, 1980--the feast of the Holy Innocents. The sign was altered with red paint and blood. SAC's international motto is "Peace is our Profession." This motto on the sign was corrected to read, "War is our Profession." Far from being damaged, we felt it was given a great improvement. What argument can there be to SAC's true profession? It is war, Nuclear War. But in this Orwellian age we live in, truth is regarded as dangerous and those giving backbone to the Truth are eventually put away.. We are not alone in our struggle. According to the October issue of the National No Nukes Prison Support Collective Newsletter, there have been 3,481 arrests of activists over the last six months; 1,476 of those arrested spent from one day to six months in jail, for a total of more than 4,475 person days--over twelve years! I do take heart in such knowledge but it was not easy last night in my cell. I was told by a guard that Bill Douglas was transferred to Leavenworth that night. As he moves on through the belly of the Federal Prison System, we have word that John Hutchens, the third arrested sign painter, was picked up in Washington state and is on his way back to Omaha, probably to face the same six month sentence. As such things work, we last heard from John from Terminal Island in Los Angeles, CA, a strange way to get to Omaha from Washington state. [Eds. note: John passed through D.M. after being released on his own recognizance in Omaha. He has a hearing regarding the probation violation on Nov. 23, in Omaha.] I have good reason to believe six months is only the first segment of a two-shot deal for me. I was also charged with violating a "ban and bar" letter stemming from our action at SAC last Aug. 9. There were 14 repeaters (those having collected more than one "ban and bar" letter from past actions at SAC). I will be tried on Dec. 13 in Omaha for that charge along with Norman, who also pleaded "not guilty" at his Oct. 19 arraignment. If the federal government so wishes, it can claim another six months of my life. At this point there is little I can do. It is clear from yesterday's proceedings that the federal government knows how much time it is going to claim from me and will get it.

By the time I was captured, I was completely exhausted. The last three weeks of freedom I fled Des Moines, going underground with warrants out for my arrest. I made a whirlwind tour drumming up support for the blockade. My itinerary went something like this: Ames, Rochester, MN and the Pax Christi National Conference, Dubuque, New Mallorey Abbey,

Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Davenport, Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Iowa Falls, back to Ames, and finally, to Ankeny. I stayed at Catholic Workers, in rectories, and with friends. I had opportunities to speak in college classes and help organize blockade committees. Everywhere I went, I found almost complete agreement that the recent indictments and trials of non-registrants are politically motivated.

On October 19, there was an arraignment here in Omaha for those who violated their "ban and bar" letters at SAC last Aug. 9th. I did not show for the arraignment but sent Judge Peck a letter explaining why I could not be in court; I was helping to organize for the Blockade at the Des Moines Federal Courthouse on the first day of Gary Eklund's trial. I informed the judge that if he was in need of my person, he could find me at the blockade. Sure enough, two federal marshals from Omaha were on hand and arrested me along with the other 20 people arrested that day. Before the action an early Mass was held at the Cathedral for those participating in the blockade. It was a great Mass, giving me the opportunity to say good-bye to many dear friends including Bishop Dingman and my classmate, Fr. Mike O'Meara, who concelebrated the mass. The blockade itself was beautifully organized with over 200 people on hand. I want to thank the folks at the D.M. Catholic Worker and especially Mike Sprong, for stepping in and organizing the effort after I ducked out.



I now need to decide how I'm going to use this time in jail. One clear advantage of being locked up these past two weeks is a marked improvement of my personal health. With each passing day the aches and pains I have been suffering these last few months have subsided. It is a wonder what three square meals and regular hours can do for one's health! My body is getting the long overdue rest it so desperately needed. The physical healing is coming along and I am most grateful. But the more difficult healing, the healing of the Spirit is going to take more effort. Every experience of jail for me has been both frightening and beautiful.

There are the constant physical reminders that we are being kept here against our will: the electronically run steel doors which keep us confined in small divided spaces, the asking permission from guards for the simplest thing: "Can I sharpen my pencil?", the lockdown every night into the solitude of our cells. One can spend six

months without breathing fresh air or seeing sunlight except through narrow six-inch windows--damned modern design! Every privilege you have is just that, a privilege: T.V., common room, daily showers, gym, books, store, and phone calls can be taken away from you at any time with no recourse. This system, no matter how modern, clean, or pleasantly run, demands conformity and submission. We are still human beings locked up. I have had a chance to talk to guys who have been in prison before who would prefer to be in an older jail: "At least you always know where you stand." With so many physical restraints put on your person in jail, there is only one place to go for freedom--inside yourself. It is this aspect of jail that frightens me most. I'm a very active person, much more at ease in the midst of confusion and movement. I am at my best when I'm trying to do six things at once. The Catholic Worker lifestyle and I worked well together. I always knew in the back of my mind that I would have to slow down, rethink, and let the life inside me catch up with the life of activity.

My recent signs of "burnout" these last few months have actually been signs of my active life outrunning my spiritual life. By this I don't mean to say that what I have been about at the Catholic Worker was all wrong--not at all! Only that it is time for me to enter my desert experience. My desert is now my prison cell. May I go on record as a God-fearing man: I'm scared as hell of what I may find out. Me, my cell, and God alone without my friends, good times and activity to protect me. A frightening thing but also in Faith, a beautiful experience. I am grateful

I can receive the Eucharist several times a week. I have begun to pray the Prayer of Christians everyday. The Psalms have taken on new meaning

these days, sung alone at night in my cell--just me and God. At times it has been a battle--I'm so hard headed! Sometimes I feel broken, weak and afraid. Yet I know in Faith, as often as I'm broken I am built up in the Lord. I ask for your prayers for me. I ask for continued physical and spiritual healing. I ask for discernment. I love you all and look forward to being with you in body, but until then let us continue to be with each other in the Spirit. +

Yours in the grip of the Spirit,
Frank Cordaro
Des Moines Catholic Worker
[Frank's address is:
Douglas County Correctional Center
710 South 17th Street
Omaha, Neb. 68102]

Discussions

Cult and culture are the first two points in Peter Maurin's program for the Catholic Worker Movement. Therefore, Mass is celebrated every Friday night at 8:00 PM(unless otherwise noted)at Lazarus House, 1317 8th.

We will be resuming our schedule of round-table discussions for clarification of thought on alternate Fridays immediately after Mass.

PLEASE NOTE: Mass is every Friday; the discussions are every other Friday, according to the schedule below.

All are welcome to join us around the Lord's table and for clarification of thought.

Dec. 10 - Mass, No discussion

Dec. 17 - Mass, Discussion

Dec. 24 - No Mass, MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Dec. 31 - No Mass, HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jan. 7 - Mass, Discussion

Call the house (243-0765) for information on other January dates.

MAY
THE PEACE OF
GOD
WHICH SURPASSES
ALL
UNDERSTANDING—
GUARD YOUR
HEARTS AND MINDS
IN
CHRIST JESUS

ST PAUL

via pacis

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The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

Catholic Worker House
713 Indians, Des Moines, Iowa

Monsignor Ligutti House of Hospitality
1301 8th, Des Moines, Iowa

Lazarus House
1317 8th, Des Moines, Iowa

Community: Es Aesfyza, Sharron Clemons, Frank Cordaro (in Absentia), Jim Harrington, Dottie Lynch, Patti McKee, Norman Searah, Mike Sprong, David Stein.

APPEAL

Dear Friends,

We are in dire need of cash in order to heat both Lazarus and Ligutti houses. Lazarus House of Hospitality is enormous and with steam heat, is expensive. Since we opened the new house in July, we have had over 350 guests stay with us.

We are blessed to be able to serve so many people. We are further blessed to have many friends who support us. Thank you, one and all!

House Needs: fresh fruits and vegetables, staple foods, cash; folks who can donate some time to typing, filing, watching the house occasionally, ANYTHING!!!!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!

Announcements

December 28, FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

Non-violent civil disobedience at the SAC-Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, NE. Meet at First Unitarian Church, 3114 Harney St., Omaha on Sun., Dec. 26, between 2-5 p.m. Participants must be in affinity groups with prepared scenarios for the Dec. 28, action. No bail fund or legal counsel is available for those risking arrest. Non-violence training will NOT be available during the weekend prior to the action, so it should be done within affinity groups, if desired. Sleeping space is available at the church (floor). A suggested donation of \$5 is requested to help cover food and expenses. For more information, contact: Joyce Glenn 1717 Izard, Omaha, NE. (402) 341-4427 or (402) 551-1721; Barb Katt--(218) 863-8597 or the Cedar Rapids C.W. (319)

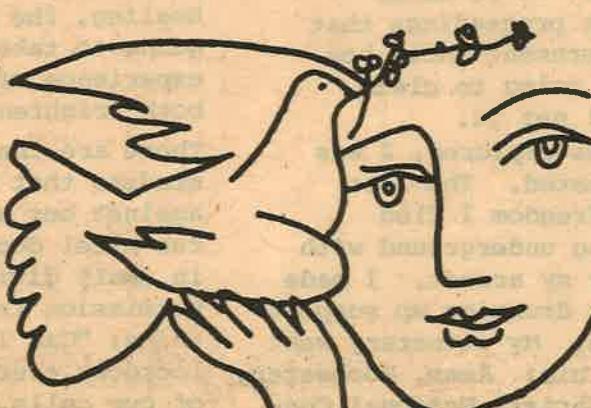
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the footpath to peace

(A thought for the opening year)

To be glad of life, because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars; to be satisfied with your possessions, but not contented with yourself until you have made the best of them; to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, and to fear nothing except cowardice; to be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts; to covet nothing that is your neighbor's except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners; to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends and every day of Christ; and to spend as much time as you can with body and with spirit, in God's out-of-doors--these are little guideposts on the footpath of peace.

-Henry Van Dyke



HOSPITALITY

by Norman Searah

Over two years ago, I moved into what is now Lazarus House. Through these years I've seen a house that would have been condemned but for Frank's vision of a larger hospitality house. It took a lot of faith, hope, and love, along with a great deal of courage to go out and beg for the community and the people we feed and shelter. In two years I've seen a condemned house become more than a house--a reality that is shared by all.

In those same two years, I've seen a great many staff (community) members come and go, somewhat like our guests; always having something to share. I have seen some community members move on to start their own Catholic Worker houses, while others have left to speak out against the Arms Race, the atrocities in El Salvador, the exploitation of the American Indians and farmers, and the injustice of draft registration.

Hospitality to me is an answer to Cain's question in Genesis: "Am I my brother's keeper?". When we speak of peace on earth and good will to people, then in some way we are stating that we are our brother's and sister's keeper. We are seeking peace on earth, yet look around--everywhere there are rumors of war. People are out of work and some are saying "if war will give me a job and save the country's economy, then let's have a war."

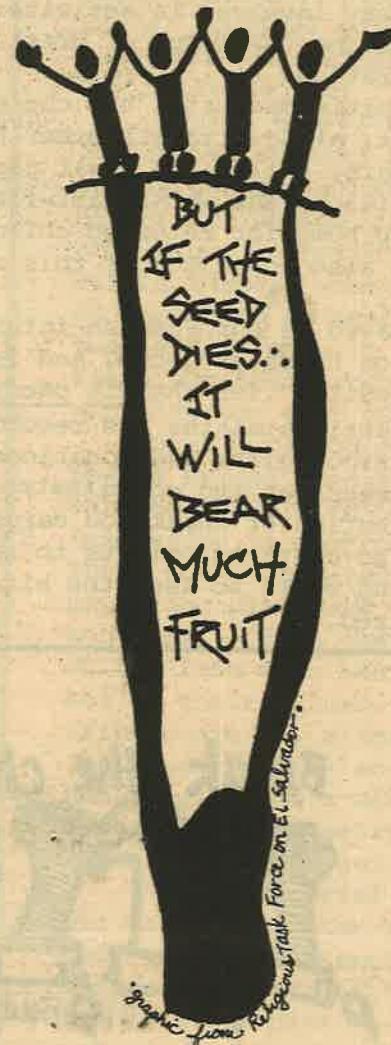
I have found in my years of being a Catholic Worker that if people opened themselves to others and looked around, then they may be surprised to see that there is no need for war because there is work to be done. First, we must get together to share with others, to find out our needs and talk. It means opening our doors (whatever they may be) and bringing in people.

As we work, we must prevent any war which would end life as we know it, by speaking out against the Arms Race, by educating the people about the Arms Race, and by finding other jobs for those working in factories that produce parts or all of the nuclear arms. We can live without war by becoming our brother's and sister's keeper. All we need is Faith, Hope, Love and each other. I would like to share with you a poem that a friend of mine wrote years ago. Her name is Sandra O'Berg and her poem has always given me strength.

The Meaning of Faith

Faith is more than just a word.
It's a feeling that's deep and true.
That with every passing hour,
Hope is born anew.
Faith means having courage
to know as days go by,
That just as long as Faith lives on--
Then Hope can never die!

In closing, I would like to thank Frank for sharing his vision of which I have been a part, by being the first to live in Lazarus House; and to thank all those people who have helped as well as those who will help the Catholic Worker; and to thank Sandy, who with her poem taught me never to give up because there is always another chance to go on living. +



FLOC President Breaks 24-Day Fast

On September 30, 1982, Baldemar Velasquez, President of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, broke a 24-day fast in a Mass at SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Toledo, Ohio. In the tradition of Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Cesar Chavez, Mr. Velasquez engaged in the water-only fast because, as he said, "Leaders have to make an extreme sacrifice when they are organizing poor men and women. If a poor worker is to give what little he or she has to a cause, a leader must do the same to be with them."

FLOC, which represents Midwestern farmworkers who harvest tomatoes, emphasizes the use of non-violent means to win their struggle for justice. Mr. Velasquez' fast was initiated to dramatize the sacrifices that migrant farmworkers have made during their five year effort to gain contracts with the Campbell Soup Company and Libby-McNeill-Libby. Mr. Velasquez explains that the fast was also a personal time of prayer and thought about the future of FLOC and the national farmworker movement. Local FLOC staff held a vigil and 36-hour fast at the Campbell Soup Company in Napoleon, Ohio on September 16, to demonstrate their solidarity with the farmworkers and President Velasquez. Supporters in the New Jersey area held a vigil at the Campbell Soup Headquarters in Camden, NJ, on September 23. Similar vigils and prayer services were held throughout Mr. Velasquez' fast in various cities and among FLOC members.



**Farm
Labor
Organizing
Committee**

Fred Eyster, Executive Director of the National Farm Workers Ministry, who came to be with Mr. Velasquez during his fast said, "The impact of this action will be like a stone dropped into a pond." Already the plight of FLOC has gained the serious attention of more religious communities. FLOC hopes people will realize the seriousness of their situation and continue to help.

Supporters can help by writing to Campbell's and Libby's to let them know of their support of FLOC. Any contributions can be sent to the FLOC office (714 1/2 S. St. Clair, Toledo, Ohio). Letters to Campbell's should go to: Gordon McGovern, Pres., Campbell's Soup Company, Camden, NJ, 08101.

Letters to Libby's should go to:
I.W. Murray, President,
Libby-McNeill-Libby
200 S. Michigan
Chicago, Illinois 60604.



community

by Sharron Clemons

Every two months or so, someone moves in and/or someone moves on. Since the last issue of via pacis, Jim Harrington and Es Aesfyza have moved in, while Frank Cordaro and Richard Cleaver have moved on. Over the life-span of this community such arrivals and departures have been routine; life went on as it always had.

This time, however, there has been a radical change. For better or for worse, there is no longer someone to tell us what to do. As Frank prepared to depart, he left to the remaining community the decision of who should govern us and how. We decided this task belongs to each of us, and should be carried on via consensus.

We have been and will continue to be a highly dynamic community. This, and the type of work we undertake has prompted many to question whether this feasible here. Our divergent backgrounds and personalities have been a source of concern as well.

Can we function at previous or higher levels of intensity and competence without the benefit of someone specifically designated to direct and motivate, referee disputes, and make the judgment calls when we go astray? Thus far we have been able to do so with the help of God, our many friends and extended community.

We have chosen this form of government, not because we are able to function in this fashion, but because we as individuals and as a community are obligated to attempt to live and work in this manner.

In our various works and activities we are constantly insisting upon, and proclaiming the imperatives of peace and justice among all people. Daily, within our own community, these same issues arise among ourselves as we try to live and work together. These issues are vital, for if they are not resolved, the community will literally fall apart. Government by consensus requires each individual to accept the responsibility of becoming peace and justice makers in confronting and dealing with each issue as it arises. If each of us is unable or unwilling to accept this responsibility for ourselves and one another in our own little world, how can we expect or insist upon the same from the others in the world at large? Moreover, this is what Christ has called each of us to become, as individuals and as a people, in the bringing about of God's Kingdom on earth. In this season of Advent, we ask for your prayers and support as we again try to revitalize this quest within our own community and within the community of the world at large.

Our tasks and activities are many. Among others, we all share in the cleaning, cooking, repairs, welcoming of guests, and providing for their needs. Also, each of us is involved in addressing various peace

and justice issues and needs throughout the community at large. However, we do possess individual forte's which draw us to primary areas of endeavor. The following briefly identifies a few such areas, which may be of interest to those wishing to contact us regarding particular issues and concerns:

Norman is our primary contact person for neighborhood relations. He facilitates identification of house needs and helps organize and complete house maintenance projects.

Mike is our contact person working with house benefactors and friends, and in organizing our Friday night discussions. He is also very involved in activities surrounding the issue of draft registration.

Dottie maintains the checking account, along with all other house documents, bills, and legal papers. In addition, she works part-time at a group home for retarded children. She is also co-editor of this newsletter.

David is our Spanish interpreter; helps on house projects, and is the "copy editor" for the via pacis.

Patti maintains the record of the various gifts and donations the house receives and coordinates distribution of thank-you cards. She also contacts priests to say mass and works to keep the kitchen organized.

I am our liaison with the Asian groups who use our resources and I attempt to keep the mailing list updated, in addition to doing the laundry.

Jim joined us in October. He is from Brainerd, Minnesota. Jim is our advocate for the guests in their dealings with support groups and agencies, and takes care of house repairs.

Es joined us in November. He is originally from Greece, has traveled extensively and lived in Canada for a time. Most recently, he has worked on ranches in the western U.S. Since his arrival here, he has made much-needed repairs on the V.W., and will be maintaining everything mechanical.

With the grace of God and your continued support, we will face the challenges of the coming year. Many blessings on you all! +



Frank Cordaro
(No Current Address)

Magistrate Peck
U.S. District Court
Box 129, Downtown
Omaha, NE 68101

October 16, 1982

Magistrate Peck,

I regret to inform you of my absence from the October 19th court proceedings. I have never missed a personal court date in the past and would be with you today if not for an overriding moral obligation.

To this date two Iowans have been indicted for refusing to register for the draft. Both of these young men have lived and worked at the Des Moines Catholic Worker where I directly "aided, abetted and counseled" them not to register for the draft. After two years it is clear to everyone, the registration law is a complete failure. Even the Selective Service puts the number of non-registrants at 500,000! A more accurate number would be well over a million. The recent indictments of non-registrants is a thinly veiled guise by the current administration to persecute dissenters of the present militaristic policies of the Empire.

I cannot help but use what time remains between now and the trial of Gary Eklund to organize and promote the strongest peoples' statement against these show trials. [Enclosed was a copy of "A CALL TO BLOCKADE", printed in the last issue of via pacis].

If you are in need of my person, you may find me at the Des Moines Federal Courthouse on the first day of the trial of Gary Eklund.



Yours in Christ,

FRANK CORDARO

Frank Cordaro
(on the road)



SAC Update



by Dottie Lynch

On October 19, nine people who had previously received "ban and bar" letters from the SAC base, were arraigned in Omaha on charges of "reentering a military installation after having previously been banned therefrom." These charges stem from the Nagasaki Day Action at the Strategic Air Command on August 9th, and are classified as petty offenses which carry maximum penalties of six months imprisonment and/or \$500 fine.

Tom Cordaro, Richard Cleaver, Sr. Joyce Horbach, Janette Funaro, Jim Dubert, and Fr. John Zeitler pleaded nolo contendre (no contest), while Fr. Carl Kabot pleaded for the children, sanity, and the conversion of SAC. After Judge Peck informed him that "the court only recognizes three pleas: guilty, not guilty, and nolo contendre," Fr. Kabot changed his plea to nolo contendre. Fr. Darrell Rupiper told the judge that he had "no defense against these man-made laws, against the weapons at SAC," and so pleaded nolo contendre. One of the nine, Norman Searah, entered a plea of not guilty and has his trial scheduled for December 13, 9:30, in Omaha.

All defendants waived their rights to a hearing before a district judge; and all, except Norman, waived rights to counsel. Norman requested and received court-appointed counsel to represent him. Judge Peck decided to release all the defendants on their own recognizance. However, Tom Cordaro refused to cooperate with the authorities in providing them with information about his family, background, etc. He told the judge that it was a matter of conscience; that such questioning was an invasion of his personhood and, as such, he could not comply. He subsequently spent two days in jail before relenting to cooperate under protest. He was then released.

Two other defendants were scheduled to appear for arraignment that day, John LaForge and Frank Cordaro, but they were not in attendance. Frank explains his absence in "News from Behind the Wall," found elsewhere in this paper.

No sentencing dates have been set, as yet, but Judge Peck indicated that late December-early January would be the soonest time sentencing could be scheduled. +

Disobedience, to be civil, must be sincere, respectful, restrained, never defiant, must be based upon some well-understood principle, must not be capricious, and above all, must have no ill-will or hatred behind it.

—Gandhi, March 1920



by Jim Harrington

Some Reflections and Impressions

It would be difficult for anyone to live for nearly sixty years and spend half that time in the field of social service, without encountering some memorable experiences and admirable people.

In the past I have had the good fortune of working for and with such social and spiritual leaders as Father Tom Rhomberg, former director of Dubuque Catholic Charities, and Harold Hughes, when he was governor of Iowa. To be associated with people like this is to inevitably learn something about conviction in pursuing the goal of social justice.

Over a period of time I have been a friend, and at times a collaborator, with others who took initiative in confronting injustice. These were dedicated workers. They put principle ahead of personal security. Often they had their jobs on the line with their commitment to act on their values. Most of these friends are now either dead, retired or fired from the social service field, but it gives me a warm feeling to reflect on the quality of company I have been privileged to keep.

But in my brief involvement with the Catholic Worker movement, I have been exposed to something new and inspiring. Most of the Catholic Worker staff have no jobs per se, to put on the line in their search for peace and justice. Their work is not a job but more a way of life. And it is a part of their lives they put on the line, both in providing hospitality to guests and in their efforts towards peace. This is particularly true when acts of civil disobedience are involved.

Though civil disobedience is not something I am personally prepared to do, I once again feel privileged to be associated with those who have the strength to carry out such necessary actions in the tradition of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, St. Paul, and Jesus Himself. My newfound friends renew my hope that the goals of peace and justice will yet someday be attained.

Surpassing even these actions are the deeds of the poor themselves with whom the Catholic Worker staff share their lives.

Last summer I saw two young brothers who were tired, hungry, and dirty from living in the back of a truck for weeks while they sought work in Minneapolis. They waited for hours to secure temporary shelter so they could rest, bathe and prepare themselves to resume their job search. But when they learned that a young mother and her child were still seeking emergency shelter, these young men gave up the room, in deference to the mother and child, and returned to living in the back of their truck.

Comparable scenes take place daily at Catholic Worker Houses.

Here in Des Moines, I have witnessed homeless and jobless people rise above their own feelings of discouragement to offer encouragement to someone else who is hurting even more. Smokers will give away their last cigarette to someone who asks for it. Families with all of their worldly possessions crammed in a car will sort through their belongings to find a jacket or shoes they can give to someone else who is in need.

Instances such as these bring real life to the parable of the widow's mite. Charity and justice live together. This is a beautiful and rewarding experience to behold. May it become universal. +



Rita Corbin

PHOTOS BY: Joe Taschetta and Joe Finnegan

by David Stein

The non-violent blockade of the federal courthouse in Des Moines was the product of months of struggle, debate and reflection. As soon as we knew that one of our neighbors had been indicted for draft resistance, we knew that a response was required of us beyond that of the voice or pen. If a man was to face the judgment of the court for his anti-war beliefs, we who share those beliefs felt morally compelled to share in some portion their consequences. So began a long process of planning sessions, dialogues with the law-enforcement authorities, and passionate recruiting for volunteers to take their protest beyond the boundaries of civil law. Uncertainty and paranoia haunted our efforts. Most of the organizing outside Des Moines was done by Frank Cordaro, a fugitive from the federal authorities for his activities at the SAC base in Omaha. We felt certain that our telephones were tapped and our movements followed in an effort to find Frank, or even to nail the rest of us for conspiracy.

For a long time we had no idea of what charges we would face on the day of the blockade. The court system does not take kindly to attempts to influence it; and I, for one, was afraid that the government would uncover some long-forgotten law prescribing death or dismemberment for anyone showing irreverence toward a federal courthouse. Apparently these fears were shared by many. In the weeks before the Big Day, we constantly heard reports of groups joining us then dropping out, or wavering on the edge of a commitment. My worst fear was a scenario of Frank and me sitting alone before the courthouse doors as a squadron of grim g-men dragged us away to face an endless prison sentence. I prayed for more bodies, more people to come forth and face arrest.



Not long before the Day, Mike Sprong, the main organizer in Des Moines, received a call from the federal marshals to arrange a meeting to

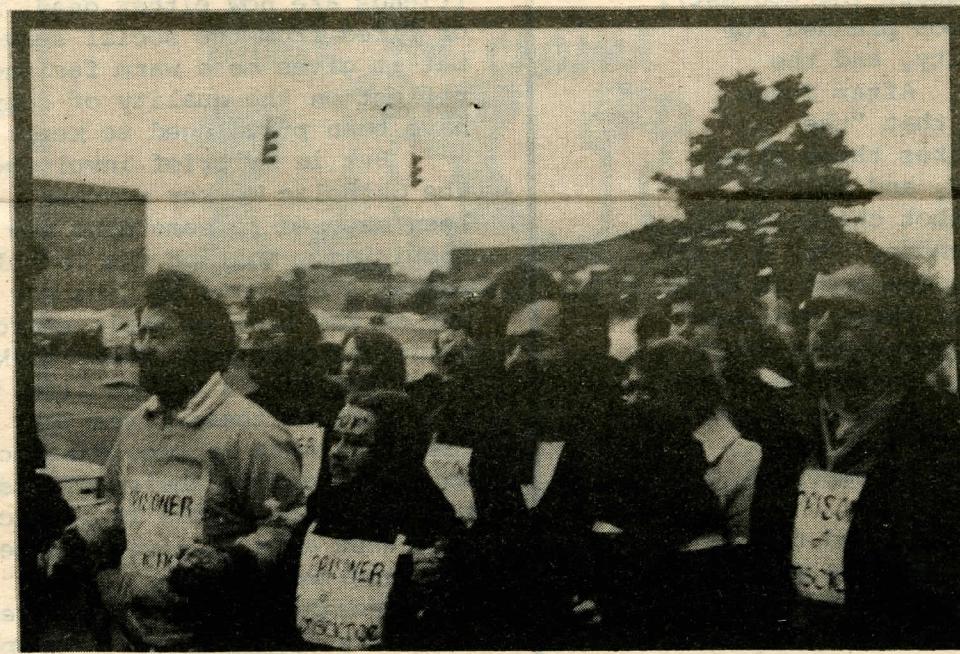
discuss the charges that the protesters would face. I paced the floor and smoked cigarettes awaiting his return. After what felt like hours, Mike entered jubilant. The marshals' proposal: a line will be drawn around the courthouse designating the city and federal property boundaries. Those who sat down on the city side of the line would be charged with loitering by a public building, a simple misdemeanor charge, punishable by one to 30 days and/or a fine not to exceed \$100. Those who crossed the line onto federal property would be charged with Picketing and Parading in violation of Title 18, U.S. Code, Section 1507 (Obstruction of Justice).

STOP POLITICAL STOP POLITICAL



21 are arrested

at Gary Eklund's Trial

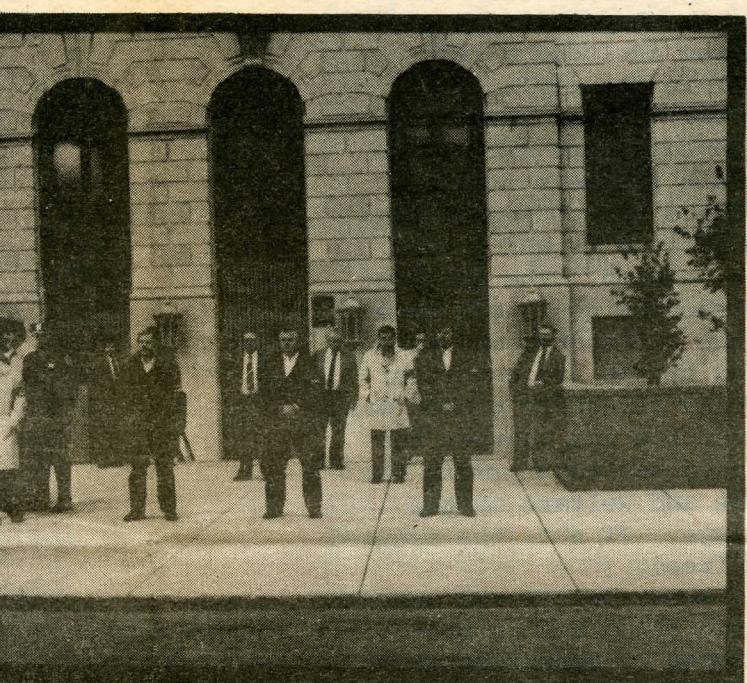
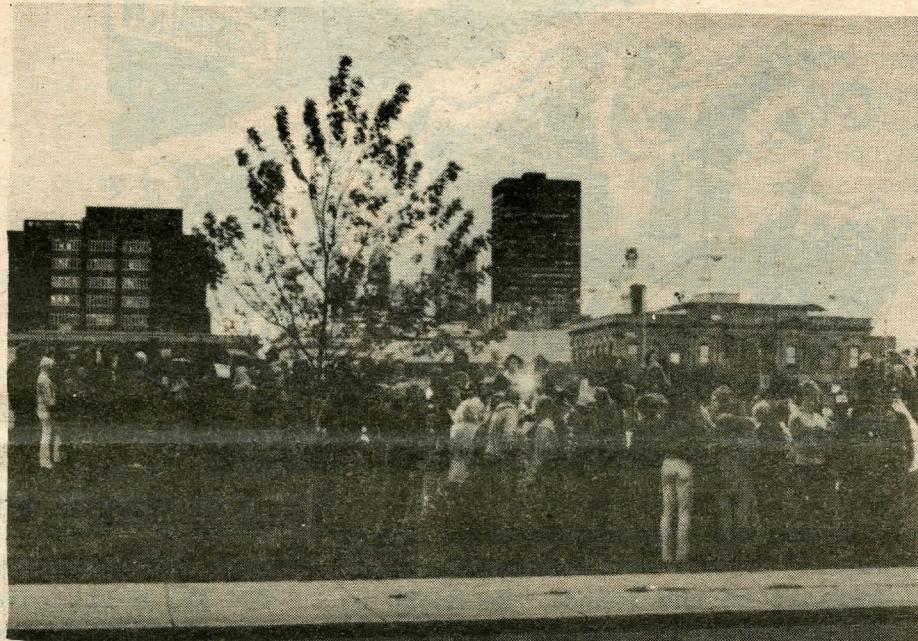


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It starts
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One m



LITICAL TRIALS! LITICAL TRIALS!



Suddenly the possibility of great masses of protesters willing to take the lesser city charge became imminent. The euphoric mood of the organizers reached a peak the day before the blockade, when the pacifistic hordes began arriving. At the final meeting that night, a show of hands revealed approximately 50 people willing to do civil disobedience, a significant fraction of whom swore to "go federal." The morning came and we gathered and marched to the courthouse. There was the chalk line with several marshals stationed behind it. Eighteen people (the fugitive Frank Cordaro among them) crossed the line, sat down, and were arrested. The remainder of the CD'ers sat on the sidewalk waiting for the Des Moines police to arrest them. To our amazement, the city police were nowhere in sight and it became apparent that they had no intention of arresting us; rather they would let us sit there all day while the trial of Gary Eklund went on as planned.

Keep up the Resistance

It starts when you care to act.
It starts when you do it again after they say no.
It starts when you say WE
And know who you mean
And each day you mean
One more.

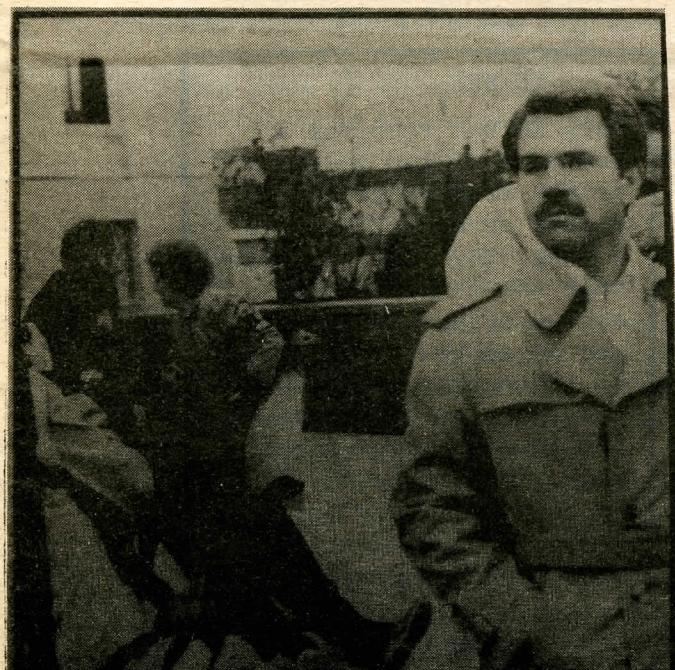
—Marge Piercy

Gary Eklund, draft resister, was ushered into the courthouse in front of us along with his lawyers and a cast of other characters, while we sat and wondered what to do. Shortly thereafter, two others and I, determined to protest the trial as strongly as we could, decided to cross the line. The marshals gently dragged us into the courthouse and took us to the large cell where the first group of eighteen was being held. In the next few hours we formulated our plans for bail solidarity, whereby if any one of us was refused release pending trial (with the exception of Frank, who stood no chance of being released anytime soon) we would all elect to remain behind bars. There were reunions of old friends and introductions of new ones in the cell. Late in the afternoon we went before a judge, who released us on a signature bond (essentially a promise to appear in court on the appointed day). We emerged to a hero's greeting from the remnants of the crowd still outside.

I must commend the U.S. marshals for the extreme courtesy with which they treated us. There was hardly

a sign of animosity from any of them. However, my predominant thought on the day's events is that the trial of Gary Eklund did go on as planned and he was quickly convicted of "failing" to register for the draft, as everyone knew would happen. Our drama was carried out with respect and professionalism on both sides and, yet, wars continue to be waged. People do as they are told or are paid to do, and those who disobey are punished, more brutally in some places than others. Who among you will disobey? [Eds. note: The actual charge against the arrested protesters appears below. However, many sections seem applicable to all of the 200+ folks who gathered in support. And they call this justice??]

CHARGE: "That on or about Oct. 27, 1982, (names of 20 defendants), individually and together as members of an organized group, knowingly and willfully participated in picketing, parading and demonstrating with the intent of interfering with, obstructing and impeding the administration of justice and with the intent of influencing a judge, juror, witness or court offices in the discharge of his or her duty near a building housing a court of the United States located at E. First Street and Walnut Street, in Des Moines, Iowa on the 27th day of October, 1982, at a time before and during the trial of one Gary John Eklund, Criminal No. 82-77. Further, said defendants did assemble and did sing, chant or recite in unison "stop the political trial", did carry and display signs or banners stating "political trials are unconstitutional", "no one has the right to make people register" and "end registration now", and did, by lying and sitting down on the sidewalk at a place known to them as being near the U.S. Courthouse for the Southern District of Iowa, knowingly and willfully demonstrate with the intent of influencing a judge, juror, witness, and court officer in the discharge of his or her duty. This is in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1507." [We urge any and all of the Oct. 27 supporters who were not arrested on the above charge, yet who sang, chanted, carried signs, sat or lay on the sidewalk to turn yourselves in for prosecution on the above charge as a show of solidarity. The address is: Asst. U.S. Attorney George Murray, U.S. Courthouse, E. First and Walnut, D.M., IA 50307. The arraignment of the Des Moines 20 was Nov. 23.] +



CONSCIENCE ON TRIAL

by Mike Sprong

The trial of Gary Eklund was a total perversion of Justice. Because I was outside, working with the blockade, I was unable to observe the entire trial. That which I did see, however, made me ill. The entire trial consisted of hard, cold facts. Only the evidence which had to do with whether Gary had "failed" to register was allowed. There is no room in the Federal Justice [sic] System for one's conscience.

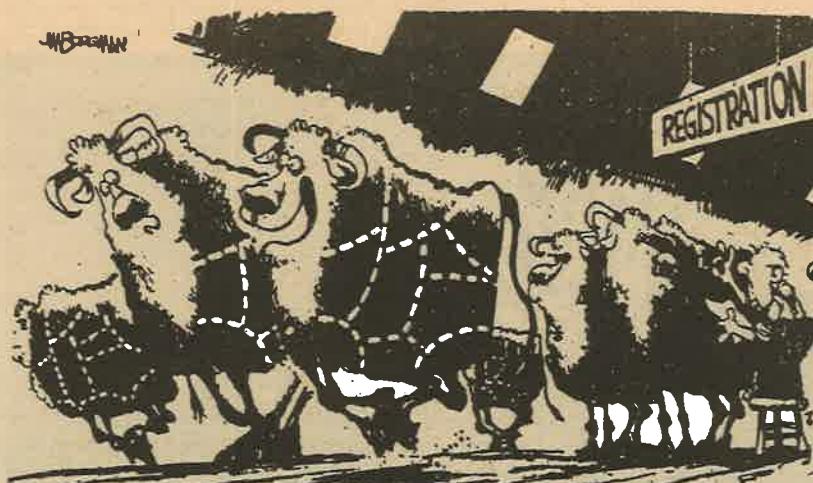
At 9:30 A.M. the jury selection began. Over an hour later, the final twelve were chosen. Soon the government opened its case against Gary. What did the government prosecutor have to prove? First, is Gary a male? His presence in the court-

room was proof of that. Is Gary of registration age? Production of a birth certificate indicated that he was born in 1960 and, therefore, required by law to register within 30 days of his eighteenth birthday. Is Gary registered with the Selective Service System? Prosecutor Beck produced a witness who works on the SSS computers in the Washington, D.C. headquarters. Computer printout sheets were displayed showing how the SSS discovered that Gary was unregistered. Finally, did Gary receive adequate notice of his duty to register? More computer printout sheets were displayed which revealed that Gary had received letters from the SSS telling him to register.

Next, Beck brought in his star witness, a fellow U.S. Attorney who testified that he had drafted and sent a letter to Eklund from the U.S. Attorney's office which contained a photocopied Selective Service registration form and a warning to register or face prosecution. Second to testify that Gary had adequate notice to comply was an F.B.I. agent. He had visited Gary at home to inform him that the U.S. Attorney's office would seek an indictment against him if he did not register. Of course, the agent also had a registration form with him; Gary did not fill it out. The prosecution then rested its case.

Gary's arguments, those which were allowed, dealt with the unfairness and ambiguity of the registration law. For weeks Gary and his attorney, Mark Bennett, had been trying to get the case dismissed. Each pre-trial hearing I attended was very cut and dried. It appeared that Judge Vietor was unwilling to take any initiative in ruling on the case. Time after time, he would cite the rulings of Judge Thompson, the judge in Ben Sasway's California case; upholding all of Thompson's decisions.

**STOP
THE
DRAFT**



"NO SWEAT! HE ASSURED ME HE HAS NO INTENTION OF SENDING US TO MARKET—
HE JUST WANTS TO KNOW HOW MUCH MEAT IS AVAILABLE!"

by Dottie Lynch

On the day of the trial Gary, acting as his own counsel, called himself to the stand. He began by discussing the Supreme Court decision of 1980, which declared that registration was constitutional even though it did not include women. By the time the ruling from the highest court came down, Gary assumed his duty to register was ended. Because of the legal questions and court proceedings about registration taking place during the week he was supposed to register, he did not register. When the question was finally "cleared up" by the Supreme Court, Gary assumed his duty to register did not continue. Indeed, there is no clause in the registration law (MSSA 4771) which stipulates a continuing duty to register.

In short, the remainder of Gary's defense did not explain whether he registered, but why he didn't. A week prior to the trial, Judge Vietor had instructed Gary not to discuss "the constitutionality, the morality, or the wisdom of this law in the courtroom".

When the final arguments were concluded, Judge Vietor instructed the jury on how they would come to their decision. The thing that sticks out in my mind is the fact that the jury was told that the decision they reached depended solely upon whether Gary had registered. Nothing else mattered. The jury of ten women and two men deliberated for only 42 minutes before returning a verdict of guilty. Gary's sentencing date is Dec. 2, at 1:00 p.m. in Des Moines. He is appealing the decision.

What bothers me most is the total disregard the "Justice System" has for individuals; the total disregard for conscience. If the rightness or wrongness of the law cannot be challenged in the courtroom, then where? God bless us all. +



FLASH!

Gary Eklund received a sentence of two years in prison from Judge Harold Vietor on Dec. 2, in Des Moines, IA. Gary reported that the sentence came as "no surprise," and he mentioned that his date of sentencing was two years to the day, after the four American women were found murdered in El Salvador. Gary is appealing the case.

LATIN AMERICA

by Patti McKee

Dr. Julio Quan, a Guatemalan college professor, was in Des Moines November 6 and 7, to tell of the struggles of his people. He spoke to a crowd of almost 40 at the Drake Newman Center and to a group of nuns at Mercy Hospital.

Because of threats on his life, Dr. Quan is now residing in Costa Rica. Besides being a college professor, Dr. Quan also worked twelve years for the Guatemalan government collecting data for various studies.

Some of this data he passed on to us. It reflected the plight of the poor in his native land. About 60% of the land in Guatemala is owned by 2% of the farms. This land, the country's most fertile, is mainly used for cash crops which will be exported. The poorer, rocky soil is left to support the Guatemalan people. Forty-one percent of the farms consist of less than two acres, hardly enough to support a family. Therefore, in order to support one's family, part of all of the family must work also for the larger, corporate farms. Because of the poverty, most children are working by age seven. By age 10, they are full-time workers. As a result, the children's education suffers. Only 49% of the children go to school although it is mandatory. Thirteen percent of the population has finished high school, and only seven percent of these graduates continue on to college.

In addition to the lack of education, the children also suffer from malnutrition and disease. About 42% of the babies born are underweight because the mothers were not adequately fed during pregnancy. One half of the infants born, die by age five. At age five, 81% of the children have some form of malnutrition. This lack of proper nourishment decreases the people's ability to work. A worker's average daily calorie intake is 2700 calories, whereas it should be in the range of 3500-4000 calories/day to maintain the energy level necessary to cut sugar cane or pick cotton. This energy loss cuts down on the people's productivity. Dr. Quan indicated that in ancient times, the region's population was larger, yet the people were able to feed themselves adequately.

The United States tends to view the problems of the Guatemalan people as stemming from their inherent laziness. Dr. Quan suggested that the U.S. has a "blame the victim" mentality rather than looking at the ways in which U.S. foreign policy affects the Guatemalan people.

Some U.S. corporations, such as the United Fruit Company, own the large farms in Guatemala. Thus U.S. policies operate in such a way as to protect the interests of these corporations.

Dr. Quan cited one such example that occurred in his country. Shortly after WWII Guatemala's dictator was overthrown, allowing elections to be held and enabling a democratic form of government to develop. This new government advocated the redistribution of agricultural land. According to the land reform the government would have the right to expropriate land from those who had 220 acres

or more of unused land. The government would then resell the land. Through this reform 100,000 families received land.

The United Fruit Company did not like this move by the government. They had informed the Guatemalan government (for tax purposes) that their unused land was worth only \$600,000. However, after the government took their land, they claimed the value of it was \$60 million and demanded compensation on that amount. The United Fruit Company worked to convince the Guatemalan people that their democratic government was actually communist.

The U.S. government also came in to protect the interest of the U.F.C. In 1954, John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles of the CIA, conspired and obtained the money and weapons necessary to overthrow the democratic government of Guatemala. As a result of actions by the United Fruit Company and the United States' government, the people of Guatemala have a skeptical view of what democracy really means. They see the U.S. as supporters of repressive regimes and oppressors of those who try to help the poor, by labeling them "communists" and co-conspirators in their extermination.

Dr. Quan's information gives us a view of U.S.-Guatemalan relations from the perspective of the exploited and calls us to seriously question our government's foreign policies. +



'THE MX MISSILE LINE'

©1982, JOE TASCHERI

I). THE GOVERNMENT'S IN THE RAIL-ROAD BUSIN-ESS
IN A BIG WAY. SPEN-DIN' THIRTY-SIX BILLION OF OUR
HARD EARNED DOLLARS ON AN UN-DER-GROUND RAIL-
WAY. & THERE'S NO SENSE DE-NY-IN'. THAT'S
WHAT OUR MON-EYS BUY-IN'. THIS IS THE TIME FOR
CRY-IN', ON BOARD THE M-X MIS-SILE LINE! (\$THERE'S)



The MX Railroad it goes nowhere
'cept in circles under the sand
It carries nothin' but nuclear bombs
for wars throughout my land

What could this money buy instead
if sound thinking could be found
A web of tracks so badly needed
to move the people round

Trains are the only means of mass transportation
where oil need not be burned
We could save 30 million barrels each year
and have a 12% investment returned

So you pay your money, take your choice
which railroad do you choose
Do you want to move people or bombs
one you win, the other gonna loose

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

Double Standards: An Assault on the Oppressed

Whenever it started and however it started, the government of the United States, which I was taught to love and respect because of its "integrity," has become a harbinger of falsehood and a protector of liars. However much it hurts "traditional patriots" it is a reality which can be proved over and over again in one country alone, El Salvador. It is also being proved in Guatemala and Honduras as it was and still is in Chile and Brazil. I have lost support because of this witness to the truth. But if I were to withhold the truth because of money then, I, too, would become a harbinger of liars and falsehood. We have reached a point in our history where convenience because of economic interests (materialism) is more important than truth and human life. Our State Department has amply demonstrated this policy and Mr. Reagan has clearly enunciated it. I'm not talking about secrets of state, private and confidential matters . . . I can accept some of that in the world in which we live (though the world would be better off without it). I am talking about public things like who killed the four American women in El Salvador (we all know including the State Department, but because their killers are members of the party we support, the State Dept. will not pursue the matter). Our former Ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White, knew and spoke publicly. That is why he is no longer the ambassador. Our present ambassador, Deane Hinton (CIA ties) knows but has kept his mouth shut. That's why he's still the ambassador . . . We now have the latest and classic demonstration of the deterioration of American integrity in the world. [And please let's not say that the Russians are worse, because I am not Russian and I do not live in Russia. I am concerned about the integrity of my own country, the United States]. Some days ago, eight leaders of moderate opposition organizations in El Salvador were kidnapped. Every indication pointed to the military as the culprits. Our Ambassador Hinton was not about to accuse the military but he finally stuck his foot not only into his mouth but right down his throat when he said "whoever executed the crime (kidnapping) pretends to destabilize the democratic efforts which are being carried on in El Salvador." Well, our own Embassy officially recognized the fact that the military were responsible for the kidnappings. State Department spokesman Hughes admitted that the American Embassy in El Salvador had reported that the military was responsible. Deane Hinton, by the way, had previously said that the Salvadoran government had "nothing to do with this terrible event." A reporter asked Mr. Hughes if the words of the ambassador about the destruction of the democratic process by those who committed this crime applied to the military which we know were responsible. Mr. Hughes did not have the courage to say "yes,

The U.S. War In Central America



if they kill me,
I will rise in the struggle
of the Salvadoran people.

ARCHBISHOP OSCAR A. ROMERO

they certainly should be applied". Out came the beginning of the double standard. He said: "No comment."



If the freedom forces were involved, there would have been a plethora of words by the State Department condemning this "hideous crime." Where does it end? Where do we expect to find truth in our government? We have proved over and over again, many have proved it, that Mr. Reagan, Mr. Haig, Mr. Enders, Mr. Hinton, General Rios Montt, President Magana, Colonel Garcia have all lied about the realities in El Salvador and Guatemala. What Mr. Nixon did in the Watergate scandal was nothing compared to the destruction of American traditional qualities of freedom, equality, and justice; most of all, integrity, which is being carried on by Mr. Reagan. As I said, if superpatriots are disturbed by what I write, then I ask them to examine the facts. They can get the facts from the State Department. They need not take my word for it. If the American Congress does not resume control of the destiny of our States as the legitimate representatives of the American people, then there will be a time when a Congress will not be needed. There is no time like the present for Americans to insist on the return to truth and integrity in the affairs of state. This is the time to insist that we send "diplomats and statespersons" as our representatives abroad and not CIA operatives. I am sure there has always been some wheeling and dealing in every administration in the history of our country. But what occurred in Mr. Nixon's tenure and what is occurring in Mr. Reagan's presidency are unmatched in history. We know that you can no longer deny that General Rios Montt's government is slaughtering indigenous people in Guatemala. Yet, our State Department makes no comment on it. We cannot any longer, as part of our foreign policy, accept Mr. Reagan's priorities of American economic and political interests being more important than the human rights of other peoples. It is un-American, it is inhuman, it is against the finest of religious and humanitarian traditions. Yet, Americans are tolerating it, that is, except a few supersensitive people. +

- Mike Colonnese (Mexico)



LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

October 27, 1982

Dear Friends,

I have spent three of the most grueling days of my life, and I wish to share the experience with every mother and sister who will listen.

Earlier this week we held what we call a family dinner. Usually we gather together for joyous times or just a special need to be together. This dinner was different; it was of sadness and pain. We were gathered to express our love and support for two of our brothers who were about to commit a crime, with the possibility of jail sentences, for which we would not be together for some time.

The two brothers I speak of are Frank and Tom Cordaro. They are two of five brothers I have, and of all I am very proud to say that I'm their sister. They were about to embark on the blockade of the federal courthouse in protest of the trial of Gary Eklund for refusing to register for the draft. Frank and Tom have been speaking out against many things, including registering for the draft, for a number of years now and even though I felt a great concern and need to help, I never felt it as much as I did today.

I believe what finally made me want to take a stand was a notice I received saying I was to appear for federal court jury duty on the same morning as the blockade. Some called it irony, I called it the Lord's way of saying, "Now." So it began at 6:00 this morning. We gathered at Saint Ambrose for a special Mass. From there my son and I decided to be at the federal courthouse to await their arrival. We stood there looking toward the bridge as over 200 strong they approached. Our hearts fell as we pondered the imminent outcome for my brothers and his uncles. We watched and waited as the group crossed the street. Frank and Tom, arms linked with the others and roped in chains representing repression, met face-to-face at a white line with federal agents.

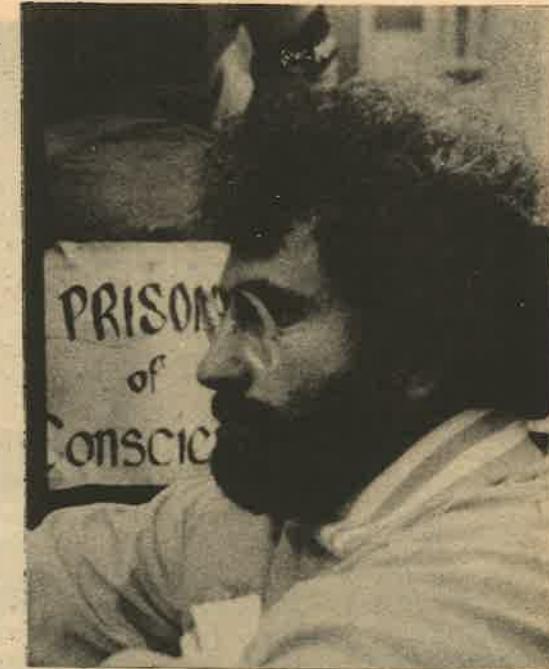
Shortly before this time, my brother, Rick, joined us in our watch. We tried to get closer as Frank was taken away but were told to move back. Then Tom, who decided not to stand and walk when arrested, submitted to being dragged bodily. At this point we could not hold back the pain any longer. We three stood there, clutching each other in grief. As time moved on, I knew I had another duty to perform: my appearance for jury duty. Walking into the federal courthouse I had no idea of the trial for which we were being tested. I soon found out: the Gary Eklund trial. "My God," I prayed, "please let me be picked", even though I knew once asked the question about impartiality, I would be dismissed. Out of over 42 potential jurors, my name was not chosen for the final twelve.

I don't know what I felt at that time—numb, disappointed, or relieved. I did know that Frank, Tom and nineteen others were locked away somewhere, and although I didn't get to present myself as I had intended to do in that courtroom, they were saying it for me. Our family name gets a great deal of backlash, but overall, we find honest support for what Frank and Tom have done in trying to make this a better world for my children and the children of future generations.

In the name of our Christ who lived a life of Peace and Love,

A sister who is proud and loves her brothers very, very much.

DeeDee Cordaro Melsi



Therefore, what we are all looking for is a place within 120 miles of SAC. The house need not be exceptionally large; city and country both have advantages. What we need are some rooms to arrange our things in, a place to feel at home when we come out of jail, a quiet place to assimilate our experiences. Our needs are simple, and the more simple the living arrangement, the better. We can be easily prepared to live without centralized heat, electricity, and running water. We are experienced in the repair of old buildings, and some physical labor would be a welcomed task.

Activists in the midwest who have been jail-goers have been providing for their needs "by hook or by crook." This has hindered our growth as a community and placed a disproportionate burden on a few. The Catholic Worker Houses in Des Moines and friends in Omaha have been carrying the weight of feeding and housing folks involved in the legal process and taking time out to visit those people in jail. We fear as our numbers grow, our friends in Des Moines and Omaha may become overburdened by our needs.

Although our income is at best sporadic, we would be happy to pay property taxes or reach some other agreement to the benefit of both parties. At present, there are eight people living in various parts of the midwest interested in living together in such a community. At any given time the number of people at home would no doubt be less due to travels or jail sentences. We are asking that you keep us in mind. If you have some thoughts or information which may help us, please contact: Joyce Glenn
411 N. 40th St.
Omaha, NE 68131

Thank you.

In Peace,
Barb Katt



LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS



It is a happy
THING & joyful
to have to think
of the love
of God
to come to the
place where
we are always
in the fulfillment
of His will know
when all
we will know
one of the friends
of Hitlerites
enemies
will be tortured
and developed
when we will
be truly
loved.

CHRIST the Workman

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